

What is claimed is:

1. A dough dropper comprising in combination:
an elongated stem body terminating in a cavity with a mouth;
a plunger body reciprocally associated with the stem body;
5 a base block rotatably associated with the stem body, said base block having relative thereto an upwardly axially extending spiral shaft that slidably associates with the plunger body and a downwardly extending finger that extends slidably over side wall portions of the cavity when the base block rotates;
whereby reciprocation of the plunger body relative to said stem body
10 causes the spiral shaft to rotate and the finger to move slidably over the cavity side wall portions.
2. The dough dropper of claim 1 which includes a biasing spring for urging the plunger body into extended position relative to the plunger body.
- 15 3. A dough dropper comprising in combination an elongated stem body terminating in a dome configured cavity with a downwardly opening mouth, the upper end of the stem body being associated with a reciprocally moveable plunger body, the stem body holding a subassembly of spirally extending shaft, base block and a finger that extends downwardly from the base block and
20 into and along side wall portions of the cavity, a biasing spring urging the plunger body into an upward position, whereby, when the plunger body is depressed into the stem body, a portion of the plunger body slidably moves over the shaft and causes the base block and finger to rotate and thereby wipes cavity surfaces and releases dough therefrom.
- 25 4. The dough dropper of claim 3 wherein the stem body and the plunger body are each comprised of molded plastic.
5. The dough dropper of claim 3 wherein the portion of the plunger body that so slidably moves over the shaft is a driver disk fixed to the lower end of the plunger body.
- 30 6. A dough dropper comprising in combination:
an elongated stem body having a lower end and an upper end, the lower end terminating in a dome configured cavity with a downwardly opening

mouth;

an elongated plunger body having a proximal end and a distal end, the lower end being reciprocally and longitudinally movable through the upper end relative to the stem body;

5 the stem body holding a base block that is rotatable relative to the stem body, the base block having a spirally extending shaft upwardly projecting from the block axis, and the base block having a downwardly extending finger that extends into and along side wall portions of the cavity;

10 a portion of the plunger body being associated with the shaft and longitudinally slidable therealong; and

a biasing spring for urging the plunger body into an upward position relative to the stem body;

15 whereby, when the proximal end of the plunger body is moved towards the stem body, the distal end of the plunger is depressed into the stem body, and the plunger body slidably moves over the shaft and causes the base block and finger to rotate and thereby wipes cavity surfaces and releases dough therefrom.

7. The dough dropper of claim 6 wherein the portion of the plunger body so slidably associated with the shaft is a driver disk that is fixed to the distal end of the plunger body.

20 8. A dough dropper comprising in combination:

an elongated, generally hollow stem body having opposed lower and upper ends, said lower end defining a flared, walled, generally dome configured cavity that defines a downwardly opening mouth, and said upper end defining an upwardly opening channel aperture;

25 an elongated plunger body having an upper proximal end and an opposed lower distal end, said proximal end terminating in a knob, and said distal end defining longitudinally adjacent thereto a constricted plunger lower body region and having a terminal driver disk, said distal end extending into said stem body through said upwardly opening channel;

30 said plunger body being longitudinally reciprocal relative to said stem body, and said plunger body and said stem body including cooperating means for limiting the extent of longitudinal movement of said plunger body relative to

said stem body and including cooperating means for preventing rotational movement of said plunger body relative to said stem body;

said stem body holding internally adjacent said cavity a rotatable but longitudinally immovable base block and including means associated with said stem body for so holding said base block, said base block having opposed upper and lower end portions;

said base block having one end of a rigid sliding finger fixed centrally at its lower end portion, said rigid finger

projecting axially downwardly through and into said walled cavity,

extending adjacently and slidably over localized surface portions defining said cavity, and

having an opposed end terminating adjacent to said mouth;

said base block further having one end of a straight extending, spirally twisting drive shaft with opposed flattened side faces fixed centrally at its upper end portion, said drive shaft having an opposed end extending through said terminal driver disk;

spring biasing means retained in said stem body between said base block and said plunger body and extending circumferentially around said constricted plunger lower body region for yieldingly urging said plunger body axially upwardly relative to said stem body;

whereby, when said plunger body is moved longitudinally relative to said stem body, said driver disk slides over local portions of said drive shaft and rotates said drive shaft, said base block and said sliding finger, thereby slidably moving said sliding finger over said surface portions of said cavity and separating dough contained in said cavity from said cavity.

9. The dough dropper of claim 8 wherein the number of twists along said drive shaft are such as to cause said sliding finger to rotate through about 360° over said surface portions when said plunger body is longitudinally moved from a fully extended position to a fully compressed condition relative to said stem body.

10. The dough dropper of claim 8 wherein said spring biasing

means is a coiled spring that resists compression and said spring normally encircles said drive shaft and said constricted plunger lower body region of said plunger body.

5 11. The dough dropper of claim 8 wherein said stem body is enlarged adjacent to said upper end to facilitate hand grasping.

 12. The dough dropper of claim 8 wherein a first bulkhead supports said lower end portion of said base block in adjacent, spaced relationship relative to said cavity and said sliding finger extends from said base block through said first bulkhead and into said cavity.

10 13. The dough dropper of claim 12 wherein a chamber exists in said stem body between said first bulkhead and the adjacent wall portion of said cavity, and wherein a window is defined in said stem body accessing said chamber whereby said chamber can be flushed with water or the like in cleaning said dough dropper.

15 14. The dough dropper of claim 12 wherein a second bulkhead supports said upper end portion of said base block and said second bulkhead and said first bulkhead cooperate to allow said base block to rotate therebetween but not to move longitudinally in said stem body.

20 15. The dough dropper of claim 8 wherein said base block is comprised of molded plastic and includes an upper end plate and a lower end plate interconnected together by four circumferentially spaced longitudinally extending, centrally joined ribs.

 16. The dough dropper of claim 8 wherein said stem body is comprised of two longitudinally matingly engageable halves of molded plastic which when assembled are bonded together by an adhesive means.

25 17. The dough dropper of claim 8 wherein said plunger body is comprised of two longitudinally matingly engageable halves of molded plastic which when assembled with said driver disk are bonded together by an adhesive means.

30 18. The dough dropper of claim 17 wherein said driver disk is comprised of plastic and is provided with a plurality of peripherally projecting, equally circumferentially spaced flanges which engage matingly holes defined

adjacent the distal end portion of said plunger body.

19. The dough dropper of claim 8 wherein said plunger body has:

5 a baffle plate circumferentially extending therearound at the upper end region of said constricted plunger lower body region, and

said baffle plate has flattened opposing side regions that extend parallel to each other, and also has a pair of opposing notches defined in edge portions thereof located medially between said opposing side regions, and wherein an upper region of said stem body has defined therein

10 a pair of laterally spaced, parallel, longitudinally extending guide walls with

a pair of longitudinally extending opposed ribs defined therein located medially between said guide walls, and

15 a pair of bulkheads, each one located at a different end of said guide walls and said ribs, and

wherein said baffle plate is positioned between said pair of bulkheads, each of said opposing side regions is adjacent a different one of said guide walls, and each of said notches engages a different one of said opposed ribs whereby said plunger body can reciprocatingly move relative to said stem body without rotational movement.

20 20. The dough dropper of claim 8 wherein said sliding finger, said shaft, and said spring are each comprised of metal.

21. A process for transferring with a dough dropper cookie dough from a dough batch and dropping regulated amounts of said dough upon a
25 cookie sheet for baking, the dough dropper comprising in combination an elongated stem body terminating in a cavity with a mouth, a plunger body reciprocally associated with the stem body, a base block rotatably associated with the stem body, the base block having relative thereto an upwardly axially extending spiral shaft that slidably associates with the plunger body and a downwardly extending
30 finger that extends slidably over side wall portions of the cavity when the base block rotates; whereby a reciprocation of the plunger body relative to the stem body causes the spiral shaft to rotate and the finger to move slidably over the cavity side

wall portions, the process comprising the steps of:

- (a) filling the cavity of the dough dropper with cookie dough;
- (b) positioning the cavity mouth over a cookie sheet while holding the stem body; and
- 5 (c) reciprocating the plunger body relative to the stem body whereby the sliding finger moves over surface portions of the cavity and the dough in the cavity is released from the cavity and deposited upon the cookie sheet.

22. The process of claim 21 wherein said steps (a) through (c) are successively repeated.